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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By A. E. Balch, M. A. London: Charles H. Kelly. Pp. 266.

This book belongs to a series entitled, "Books for Bible Students," of which the Rev. Arthur E. Gregory, D. D., is editor. It is not easy from a perusal of the volume before us to determine the class of readers for which it is intended. The book strikes us as being both too elementary and too advanced. For students who have already made some headway in the subject, the treatment, or a large portion of it, is too general and fragmentary. On the other hand, it frequently presupposes knowledge and ideas which beginners cannot be expected to possess.

The book opens with two introductory chapters, the first being on the value of the study of Christian Ethics and the other on the relation of Christian Ethics to other fields of thought. These are followed by three chapters which are described as "preparatory to the central or main topic," and which treat in turn of "Man as a moral agent" (ch. III), "The objective conditions of ethical life" (ch. IV), and the "Moral conflict" (ch. V). The succeeding chapters are occupied with the question of the Highest Good. After having given a brief and necessarily scanty account of the chief theories reached independently of the influence of Christian teaching (ch. VI), the author proceeds in the next chapter (ch. VII) to set forth the meaning which the conception bears in Christian Ethics. A good feature of this treatment is the emphasis laid on the social as well as the individual aspect of the *Summum Bonum*. Christianity seeks not only to provide blessedness for the individual, but also to establish a kingdom of God on earth. In addition, however, to setting up a *Summum Bonum*, Christianity supplies "a standard of conduct by which directly and immediately acts may be measured," or "an intermediate conception between the *Summum Bonum* and particular rules." This is the Christian Ideal or the Example of Christ (chs. VIII and IX). The closing chapters deal with Ethical Progress (ch. X), the Christian virtues (ch. XI), and the influence of Christian ideas on social institutions (ch. XII).

The general plan of the book, which we have outlined above, is distinctly good, but except in certain parts the same cannot be said of the execution. The unevenness of the work seems to us very marked. The treatment, which is at times lucid and vigorous, is allowed in certain places to lapse into rhetoric of a

vague and somewhat incoherent kind. The author appears to best advantage in the more general discussions or when he is occupied with the direct exposition of Christian ideas and duties. In these chapters he says much that is valuable and suggestive. Indeed, throughout the book he leaves the impression of being more conversant with Christianity than philosophy. When his treatment becomes technical, as for instance, when he essays philosophical analysis or institutes comparison between different systems, his handling of the subject is sometimes feeble and inexact. As an instance of loose and inexact description a statement occurring on page 92, may be quoted. "This is the meaning of utilitarianism—an attempt to find in all virtue and regard for others latent or modified selfishness."

The composition betrays at times great carelessness and the book contains far too many involved and awkward sentences. The following statement, on pages 49, 50, about desire, shows how careless the writer can be about his sentences. "It is frequently used as though they (sic) were conflicting tendencies to action, considered apart for (sic) their relation to the person acting." On page 45 we find "cerebral con-commitant"; on page 66 "unrestricted from."

The book contains several indications here and there of having been hurriedly written. But even as it stands, it contains much that is sound and suggestive. A thorough revision, together with the excision of certain sections where the discussion is too brief and inadequate to be helpful would considerably enhance its value and usefulness.

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THE POSITIVE OUTCOME OF PHILOSOPHY. By Joseph Dietzgen, translated by Ernest Untermane, with an introduction by Dr. Anton Pannekock. Chicago: Chas. H. Kerr & Co., 1906. Pp. vi, 444.

THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF MIND AND MORALS. By M. H. Fitch. Chicago: Chas. H. Kerr & Co., 1906. Pp. 266.

SOCIAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES. By Paul Lafargue. Chicago: Chas H. Kerr & Co., 1906. Pp. 165.

These three books may conveniently be noticed together, as all are contributions to the interesting reformulation of philos-